

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-05 EB-07 AID-05 CU-02 OPR-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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DRAFTED BY EA/TB:VLTOMSETH:LRR

APPROVED BY EA/TB - GEORGE B. ROBERTS

EA/P - MR. SMITH

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSMACTHAI

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: MARR, TH

SUBJECT: U.S. FORCE REDUCTIONS IN THAILAND

1. AP CARRIED THE FOLLOWING ITEM FILED FROM BANGKOK JUNE 18:

"THE UNITED STATES WILL PULL ABOUT A THIRD OF ITS MILITARY MEN AND PLANES OUT OF THAILAND BY THE END OF THE MONTH IN A STEPPED-UP WITHDRAWAL ANNOUNCED TODAY BY THE THAI SUPREME COMMAND.

"THE COMMAND SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO 3,500 MEN AND 48 PLANES ALREADY GONE OR SCHEDULED TO GO, THE U.S. MILITARY WILL WITHDRAW ANOTHER 4,000 MEN AND 87 PLANES.

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"THE TOTAL U.S. FORCE BEFORE THE PULLBACK BEGAN WAS 23,000 MEN AND 300 AIRCRAFT.

"THE AIRCRAFT TO LEAVE UNDER THE LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT ARE 42 F4 FIGHTERS, 20 OV10 SPOTTER PLANES, TWO HELICOPTERS, NINE AC130 SPECTRE GUNSHIPS, 12 KC135 TANKERS AND TWO C130 TRANSPORTS, THE COMMAND SAID. PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED TO GO ARE 17 B 52 BOMBERS AND 51 F111 FIGHTER-BOMBERS.

"THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND IS TO DROP TO ZERO BY NEXT MARCH BUT STUDENTS ARE PUTTING HEAVY PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT TO SPEED THE WITHDRAWAL. THE STUDENTS, AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL FORCE IN THAILAND, HAVE BUDGETED 7,500 DOLS. FOR AN ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATION SET FOR JULY 4.

"HOWEVER, OFFICIALS SAY TOO SPEEDY A WITHDRAWAL WOULD DISRUPT THAI ECONOMY SINCE THOUSANDS OF THAIS WORK ON U.S. BASES AND THOUSANDS MORE EARN A LIVING AT VARIOUS SERVICES TO THE AMERICANS.

"MEANWHILE, DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN VIENTIANE, THE LAOTIAN CAPITAL, REPORTED THAT THE SENIOR RIGHT-WING GENERAL IN SOUTHERN LAOS FLED TO THAILAND TODAY AFTER HIS TROOPS DEFECTED TO THE COMMUNIST PATHET LAO."

2. SINCE THIS CLEARLY MISREPRESENTS THE ACTUAL SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE IN BANGKOK ABOUT FORCE REDUCTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY ABOUT JUNE 30, YOU MAY WISH TO INFORM THE LOCAL AP REPRESENTATIVE IN A LOW-KEY MANNER OF THE TRUE FACTS. KISSINGER

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